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TAGS: [ETTC](#) [UNSC](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [LI](#)
SUBJECT: UN/LIBERIA SANCTIONS: LIBERIA SEEKS END TO
TARGETED SANCTIONS AND PANEL OF EXPERTS

Classified By: DEPUTY POLITICAL COUNSELOR MOLLY PHEE, FOR REASONS: 1.4(B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST: USUN PolOff met with Liberian PermRep Milton Barnes on March 12 at his request to discuss Liberia's view of the way forward on the Liberia sanctions regime. Barnes said Liberia is seeking to remove individuals from the sanctions list and to terminate the mandate of the Panel of Experts, and is seeking Security Council support for these steps in order to bolster political reconciliation and signal the progress Liberia has made in the security and natural resources sectors. ACTION REQUEST: USUN seeks Department guidance on sharing with the Liberian mission the USG list of individuals proposed for delisting in the Liberia Sanctions Committee, and on the Liberian proposal to terminate the mandate of the Panel of Experts. End Summary and action request.

¶2. (C) USUN PolOff met with Liberian PermRep Milton Barnes on March 12 at his request to discuss the future of the Liberia sanctions regime. Noting the significant progress that Liberia had made in the security and natural resources sectors, Ambassador Barnes said that Liberia now wanted to move past "the stigma of sanctions." In Liberia's view, removing the names of persons from the list of those subject to sanctions--which consist of an international travel ban and assets freeze--would assist with political reconciliation, particularly regarding those listed persons with a "political affiliation." Barnes said that the targeted sanctions had served their "corrective purpose," and it was now time to remove from the list individuals who no longer threaten the security of the country. Barnes explained that Liberia did not have the capacity to undertake the investigations needed to develop substantiated delisting requests, and looked to the U.S. and other members of the Council for their help in putting forward delisting requests.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Barnes also said that the GOL believed that the mandate of the Panel of Experts should be brought to an end, as the Panel's continued work in Liberia was a legacy of the sanctions that was no longer appropriate. Barnes noted that Liberia recognized the value of the arms embargo, and said that in Liberia's view there is no need to terminate this measure.

¶4. (C) USUN PolOff told Ambassador Barnes that the U.S. had been considering a number of delisting proposals, and intended to move forward with the requests in the near future. PolOff promised to seek an official USG position on terminating the mandate of the Panel of Experts.

¶5. (C) BACKGROUND: Although Liberia has been under sanctions since 2001, positive security and political developments since the election of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in 2006 have allowed the Council to gradually reduce the sanctions, and over the past two years the Council has lifted the bans on the import of Liberian timber and diamonds. The sanctions now consist only of an arms embargo and an international travel ban and assets freeze on individuals with ties to Charles Taylor or who pose a threat to stability in Liberia or the sub-region. The Panel of Experts is currently mandated to report on the implementation of the arms embargo, assets freeze, travel ban, and the forestry legislation passed by the GOL in 2006, which was a precursor to the Council's termination of the timber sanctions. The Panel is also mandated to report on Liberia's compliance with the Kimberley Process.

Khalilzad